



# News 4 Nutrition

## Healthy Afterschool Snacks for Kids

### Figure Out Timing

Put yourself in your kids' shoes and consider their eating schedules on a normal weekday. Find out: When is lunchtime? What and how much do they eat at lunch? Do they ever skip lunch? Does the after-school program serve snacks? This will help you figure out how hungry your kids will be when they get home.

You'll also want to think about what time you normally serve dinner. A child who gets home famished at 3:15 and eats a large snack probably won't be hungry if dinner is at 5:30. Likewise, it may not be reasonable to expect a child whose parents work late to go until 7:30 with nothing to eat since lunch.

### Create a List of Healthy Options

Next, talk about which snacks your kids would like to have at snack time. Come up with a list of healthy options together and be sure to include a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables. While a slice of cake or some potato chips shouldn't be forbidden foods, such low-nutrient snacks shouldn't be offered regularly.

If you can, take your kids along to the grocery store and

spend some time reading the nutrition facts labels and comparing products. Pay attention to the amounts of protein, fiber, calcium, and other important nutrients, and don't miss the chance to talk about portion sizes. Together, choose snacks that are low in sugar, fat, and salt. Being involved in the process makes it more likely that kids will learn to make healthy food choices.

### Make Healthy Snacks an Easy Choice

Don't expect kids — even teens — to cut up their own veggie sticks. It's just too much bother, especially when they're hungry. Kids are more inclined to eat what's handy. That's where you come in. Make healthy snacks easily available by packing them in their lunchboxes or backpacks or by having them visible and ready-to-eat at home. A hungry child, like a hungry adult, is likely to take the path of least resistance.

If you're at home after school, your youngster might enjoy helping you make a creative snack like ants on a log (celery topped with peanut butter and raisin "ants"), egg boats (hard-boiled egg wedges topped with a cheese sail), or fruit kabobs. Older kids may

enjoy a fruit smoothie, mini-pitas with hummus dip, or whole-grain crackers topped with cheese and pear slices.

Older kids often like making their own snacks, so provide the ingredients and a few simple instructions. If dinner is just around the corner, consider allowing a "first course," such as a small salad or side vegetable while you finish preparing the family meal.

For those nights when dinner is hours away, you could offer a more substantial snack such as half a sandwich or a quesadilla made with a whole-wheat tortilla and low-fat cheese warmed in the microwave and topped with salsa. Nothing too complicated, though. A good snack should take more time to eat than it does to prepare!

If your child goes to an after-school program or to a caregiver's house, find out what snacks are typically offered. If you don't like what you hear, suggest alternatives or just pack an extra snack your child can eat after school. Easy-to-pack snack options include trail mix, nuts, low-sugar whole-grain cereal, whole-grain pretzels or crackers, fresh or dried fruit, and cut-up vegetables.

## Recipe Rundown → Peanut Butter

For those kids that do not have peanut allergies, peanut butter is a kid favorite. Most everyone likely gets store-bought peanut butter. However, it might be a fun challenge to make a favorite food like peanut butter from scratch with your child. And it goes great with so many healthy foods, such as: apples, bananas, celery, toast, crackers, raisins, etc.!

### Ingredients:

1½ c. unsalted roasted peanuts  
1 tbsp. peanut oil

### Directions:

For smooth peanut butter:

Mix the peanuts with the peanut oil, and pour the mixture into the food processor.

Process the mixture until it's very smooth.

Store your smooth peanut butter in a sealed container in the fridge. It will be good for 2 weeks.



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Your Monthly Newsletter

**October 2015**



### What is Coming Up?

- ☺ Fresh Produce Market: Friday, October 2nd from 2:30–4:30 pm at East Center
- ☺ Fresh Produce Market: Friday, October 16th from 2:30–4:30 pm at West Center
- ☺ Student Nutrition Classes: Week of the 5th—South; Week of the 13th—West; Week of the 19th—North; Week of the 26th—East

### Questions or Concerns?

### Feel Free to Contact:

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